

# HISTORIC UTICA



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Text and Photography by Rand Carter  
Design by Susan Stanley



## A Guide To The City's Outdoor Sculpture

Presented By Rand Carter



Landmarks Society of Greater Utica  
1124 State St. Utica, NY 13502  
315 - 732 - 7376

Residents as well as visitors often remark on the wealth of sculpture to be found in the public spaces of Utica. Yet even

## **A GUIDE TO THE CITY'S OUTDOOR SCULPTURE**

attention to one of the city's most attractive assets, to encourage those in positions of trust to treat them with the care they deserve.

In addition to statuary commemorating historical figures, there are memorials to various armed conflicts from the French and Indian War to Vietnam. Several monuments commemorate important events of a more pacific nature while others honour outstanding service. A few are more purely aesthetic. The majority of monuments are within Utica's Scenic and Historic district, which includes all of Genesee Street and the Parkway, or can be found in one or another of the city's parks. Many can be found on the grounds of private institutions, and some grace the front lawn of private offices or houses.

This guide attempts a comprehensive coverage of statuary, but is rather more selective with respect to monuments and ornamental works such as fountains. As a matter of principle sculptures that are not original works have been excluded. (The one exception to this is the Statue of Liberty on the Parkway; but the prototype is so well known and the scale of the replica so different that the issue of the theft of

the most prominently sited public sculptures are likely to provoke question as to 'who, what and when?' Many other fine examples are in locations where for the most part they go unnoticed. This brief booklet in the Landmarks Society's ongoing series of guides attempts to answer some of these questions and, by drawing

intellectual property is clearly irrelevant.) The boundaries of Utica have been stretched to include the grounds of the Masonic Home and, in one case, New York Mills. Excluded, however, are funerary monuments, since the Landmarks Society has already published a guide to Forest Hill Cemetery and may in the future produce guides to St. Agnes and other local graveyards. Although this guide focuses on sculptures which can still be seen, it seems fitting to recall the now vanished works of Placido Tabasso (1902-1958), who following his retirement as a plasterer occupied himself with making sculptures in cement and other materials which celebrated this Italian immigrant's pride in his cultural inheritance as well as his devotion to his adopted homeland. Many older Uticans will remember fondly his *Romulus and Remus Suckled by the She Wolf*, which for many years could be seen along the railroad tracks, or his *Washington Monument* that stood at Broad and Mohawk Street.

## **GENESEE STREET**

At a time when Utica's outdoor monuments were becoming more and more like misplaced tombstones, along came Sculpture Space. Founded in 1975, this private, non-profit arts organization located in west Utica has achieved international recognition over the past quarter century for its support of artists who have reached a critical stage in their career. Each year applicants from around the world are carefully screened and a number are awarded funded residencies enabling them to take advantage of Sculpture Space's beautifully equipped studio facilities in the former Utica Steam Engine and Boiler Works. Our tour of Utica's outdoor sculpture begins with a work produced in these studios, and which can be seen—in part—in the terraced lawn at 289 Genesee Street.



During a funded residency at Sculpture Space, Hong Kong-born sculptor Wang Po Shu (b. 1952) created *ENERGY SOURCES* (1992, 1), a geomantic ('earth magic' or *Feng Shui*) sculpture intended to keep Utica in harmony and "to help residents get in touch with, or improve, the ethereal vibrations of the city." Five steel cylinders were covered with concrete and placed in the ground, with only an iron plate resembling a small manhole cover visible. The plate reads: HERE IS ONE OF THE FIVE SITES WHERE A 'C' TUNING FORK IS BURIED. YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO INVOKE, EVOKE AND PROVOKE A RESONANCE. The plate also bears the sculptor's initials.

The locations of the other four cylinders are: Empire Recycling at North Genesee and Lee Street, 14 Whitesboro Street (the site of the now vanished St. James Hotel), the Oneida County Historical Society at 1608 Genesee and the Pin-O-Rama Bowling Alley at 1724 Genesee.

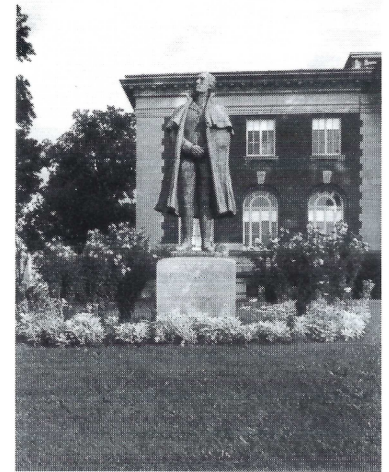
Wang describes the project as an "acupuncture of the land." From prehistoric times when it was an Indian path, Genesee Street has been the "spine" of the city. Using numerology based on Utica's birth date of 3 April 1798, Wang produced five points on Utica's grand avenue analogous to points on the spine that control the nervous system. Wang explains that the use of the "C" pitch was determined by the fact that, astrologically, Utica is under the influence of the planet Mars.

On the lawn of the Utica Public Library at 303 Genesee is *GEORGE WASHINGTON AT VALLEY FORGE* ("THE VISION", dedicated 5 June 1959, 2). The work of sculptor Benjamin Thorne Gilbert (b. Utica, 1872; d. Utica, 1961), this life-size bronze figure on stone base was donated by the Oriskany Battle Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, with part of the funding provided by the contributions of area school children. Gilbert attended Yale University and the Sorbonne in Paris before he was graduated from Columbia University in 1897. After

retiring in 1934 from a successful career in investment banking and real estate (Gilbert Road and the surrounding area on Pippin Hill in New Hartford were developed by him) Gilbert devoted himself to sculpture and history, living in Clayville and wintering in Charleston, South

Carolina. The original scheme called for a marble slab with a high-relief figure of Washington, and, in fact, Gilbert produced a clay modello in this format that was translated into marble in Italy. Gilbert was dissatisfied with the result and offered to have a free-standing statue cast in bronze at his own expense. The eighty-seven year old sculptor produced a second modello and supervised the casting in Florence. Gilbert wished to suggest by his title that even during the desperate winter of 1778 at Valley Forge, Washington had a vision of ultimate victory.

Verne Swan, one of the finest architects ever to practice in Utica—and, like Gilbert, nearing the end of his life



in 1959—selected the original site just north of the library and behind the plane of its entrance elevation. Unfortunately, those responsible for moving it in 1999 much closer to the street and at the edge of a steep embankment lacked Swan's sure aesthetic sense.

At the intersection of Eagle Street is Kopérnik Park with the imposing 21' high *KOPERNIK MONUMENT* (1975, 3) the work of Polish sculptor Bohdan Chmielski of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, Warsaw. Above the stone

base is the larger-than-life bronze figure of the Polish astronomer Mikołaj Kopérnik (Nicholas Copernicus, 1473-1543). After studying astronomy at the Jagellonian University in Krákov, Copernicus went to Italy where he studied various subjects, including medicine and canon law. In 1512 he

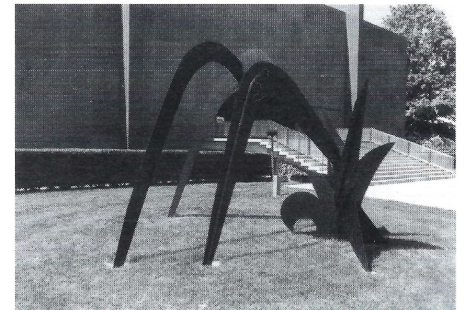


settled in Frauenburg, East Prussia where he practiced medicine and served as canon of the cathedral. His *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, dedicated to Pope Paul III, replaced the ancient Ptolemaic *geocentric* system with the Copernican *heliocentric* system. The inscription on the granite plinth of the Utica monument reads: BY REFORMING ASTRONOMY HE INITIATED MODERN SCIENCE. It is further stated on the bronze plaque below that, HE STOPPED THE SUN AND SET THE EARTH IN MOTION. After a thumbnail biography of Copernicus the inscription concludes: THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED TO COMMEMORATE THE 500<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF MIKOŁAJ KOPERNIK UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE KOPERNIK

MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION OF CENTRAL NEW YORK, INC. AND MANY OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

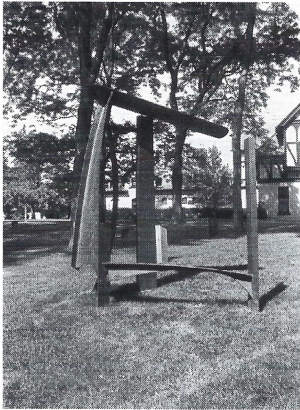
The Kopérnik monument was originally placed on the grounds of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute before being moved to its present location. Across the street, on the front lawn of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute is the *THREE ARCHES* (1963, 4) by Alexander Calder (b. Philadelphia, 1898; d. 1976). This sculpture is of

welded steel painted black and measures 96" X 144" X 100". One of the most-admired American sculptors of the twentieth century, Calder is best known for his *mobiles*, large abstract sculptures with moving parts which he began making in 1931. Beginning in 1938 he also produced *stabiles*, equally large works, but with non-moving parts. The *Three Arches* belongs to this latter category. It was commissioned from the artist by the M-W-P.



Not visible from Genesee Street are three other outdoor sculptures on the M-W-P grounds. Immediately behind the terrace of Fountain Elms is *BISON* (1938-39, 5). This granite zoomorph on a marble base is the work of Richard Davis (1904-1965), a former member of the faculty of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute School of Art, where his students included Henry Di Spirito. It was purchased from the artist's widow in the late 1960s and has proved especially delightful to young visitors to the Institute.

In the Locust Grove nearby is *TRUSTAN # 5* (1979, 6), an abstract work in steel by James Iritani (b.1948). This

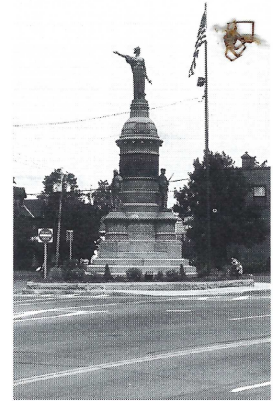


was purchased by the Museum in 1979 from the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Exhibition of Artists of Central New York. Other works by this exceptional sculptor can be found in the area, including a steel piece in the ravine behind the Beinicke Activities Village at Hamilton College.

In a small courtyard accessible from the wing connecting the Museum Building to Fountain Elms is *KING SOLOMON* (1963, 7), a bronze on granite base work with a total height of 67". This is one of the last works of the Ukrainian-American sculptor Alexander Archipenko (b. Kiev, 1887; d. NYC, 1964), one of the seminal figures in the emergence of modern sculpture. From 1908 Archipenko played an active role in the development of the Cubist movement in Paris. After 1912 he was part of the German *Sturm* group and taught in Berlin from 1921 until 1923 when he settled in the United States. His exceptional influence was a result not only of the visual impact of his semi-abstract sculptures informed with rhythmic movement, but also of his years as a teacher in New York City and, between 1937 and 1939, at the Chicago Bauhaus.

Farther along Genesee Street is Oneida Square, dominated by the *CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL* ("Soldiers and Sailors Monument", 1891, 8). The bronze figures and the relief are the work of sculptor Karl Gerhardt (b. Boston, 1853; d. 1940, near Shreveport, LA). At the time he produced this work Gerhardt was living in Hartford, CT, and Hartford architect George Keller collaborated on the design of the granite pillar and base. The bronze relief near the top of the pillar depicts the departure and return of Civil War combatants. Of the four figures at the base of the pillar the soldier and sailor facing east and west respectively are unmistakable. The figure

facing north holds the stars and stripes of the Union and may represent Victory; while the figure facing south (i.e. towards the Confederate States) has an olive branch and a cornucopia, attributes implying Peace and Plenty. The female figure on top holds an inverted sword (hilt down) in her left hand, indicating her pacific nature. Because the emblem immediately below is associated with the city, we might identify her as the personification of Utica. There are two inscriptions on the base: WE KEEP THE MEMORY OF THE MEN OF UTICA WHO RISKED THEIR LIVES TO SAVE THE UNION, and FROM SUMTER BY LAND AND SEA TO APPOMATTOX, along with the years 1861 and 1865. Higher up and encircling the pillar are the words: ONE FLAG \* ONE LAND \* ONE HEART \* ONE HAND \* ONE NATION EVERMORE.



On the lawn of the Oneida County Historical Society at 1608 Genesee is a bronze bust on stone base (c.1889, 9)



of *HORATIO SEYMOUR* by the Welsh-American sculptor, David Richards (b. Abergwynolwyn, 1828; d. Utica, 1897). Seymour (b. Pompey Hill, 1810; d. Utica, 1886) was a leading figure in Democratic politics during the nineteenth century. He was elected governor of New York in 1852 and again in 1862, and in 1868 received the

Democratic nomination for President, but lost to Ulysses S. Grant. As governor during the Civil War he succeeded

in quelling the appalling race riots which followed the introduction of military conscription.

The bronze bust of Seymour has had a somewhat peripatetic history. Its original location was on the grounds of the Omaha, Nebraska mansion of George L. Miller, a life-long friend of Seymour. In 1899 Miller decided it belonged in Utica and presented it to the Oneida County Historical Society, which placed it on the lawn of its first permanent home, the Flemish Renaissance Revival building at John Street and Park Avenue known as the Munson-Williams Memorial. On 23 September, in the presence of Governor Theodore Roosevelt, the gift was accepted by Thomas Proctor, a founding member of the OCHS. In 1957, when it was decided to destroy the splendid Munson-Williams Memorial, the bust was moved to the Horatio Seymour School where it remained until the school was closed. In 1999, after extensive conservation work on the bust, it was rededicated at its present site.

The sculptor of the Seymour bust, David Richards, left Wales c.1847 and came to the United States where he found work as a stone cutter in Utica. Around 1850 he produced a carved stone bust of Seymour and soon achieved a reputation as a sculptor specializing in portrait busts and medallions. His full-length, life-size statue of John Butterfield (1801-69) can be found in Forest Hill Cemetery.

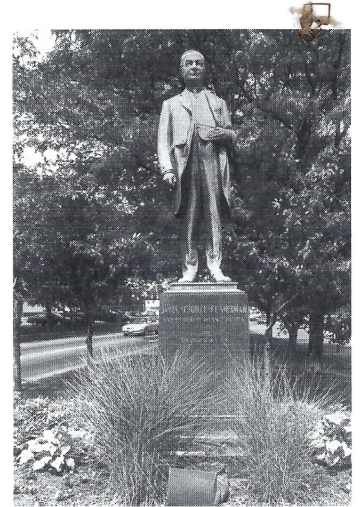
On the front lawn of the medical office of Dr. Albert Shaheen at 1641 Genesee is a steel sculpture on concrete base entitled *CRADLE FOR THE MOON* (1975, 10) by sculptor Nell Harrison Russell, who at the time was a resident of Rome, NY.

At Genesee and Burrstone Road is the life-size standing bronze figure (1923, 11) of *JAMES SCHOOLCRAFT SHERMAN* by the sculptor George Thomas Brewster (b. Kingston, MA, 1862; d. ?). A Hamilton College graduate and member of the Society of Sigma Phi, Sherman (b.

near Utica, 1855; d. 1912) was mayor of Utica in 1884 and a member of Congress from 1887-91 and again from 1893-1909. In 1908 he was elected Vice-President under William Howard Taft. He was nominated for a second term but died before the November election and was replaced on the ticket by Nicholas Murray Butler.

Brewster, who like many American sculptors of his generation had studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, earned a considerable reputation for figurative sculpture.

The statue of Thomas Redfield Proctor at the Parkway edge of Roscoe Conkling Park and the statue of Alexander Hamilton at Hamilton College are also works by Brewster.



The greatest concentration of outdoor sculpture in Utica can be found along the Parkway. The first section of a greenbelt with which Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr. proposed to encircle Utica was opened between Genesee and Elm Street in 1909. Over the next five years the Parkway was extended as far eastward as Albany Street and T. R. Proctor Park. The westerly extension along Burrstone Road to Horatio Seymour Park and across the 1913 viaduct to Addison Miller Park was only partially realized. After World War II the section east of Genesee became the Memorial Parkway, commemorating the fallen of the two world wars. Directly across Genesee Street from the statue of James Schoolcraft Sherman is the magnificently posed *MAJOR GENERAL FRIEDRICH WILHELM BARON VON STEUBEN* (1914, 12). The larger than life size bronze figure on granite base is the

work of Jakob Otto Schweizer (b. Zurich, 1863; d. Philadelphia, 1955), a Dresden-trained sculptor who emigrated to the United States in 1894.

Inscribed on the rear of the plinth are the words:  
ORGANIZER OF THE AMERICAN ARMY. HE GAVE HIS  
SWORD, HIS SERVICE AND HIS FORTUNE TO THE CAUSE  
OF LIBERTY.



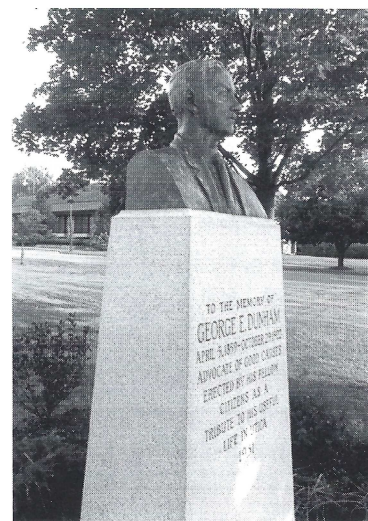
Steuben (b. Magdeburg, Brandenburg-Prussia, 1730; d. Remsen, NY, 1794) was a general staff officer in the Prussian army and in 1762 became an aide to Frederick the Great. He met Benjamin Franklin in Paris in 1777 and was given letters of introduction to George Washington, whom he joined at Valley Forge in the winter of 1778. The epithets “drill-master of the Revolution” and “General Washington’s right

arm” were well deserved, as he was able to transform a band of farmers into an effective fighting force. In lieu of financial compensation for his heroic efforts, Steuben received various land grants, including 16,000 acres in what is now the Town of Steuben, north of Utica. With the assistance of his one-time aide-de-camp, Captain Benjamin Walker, he offered 100-acre lots to settlers, a sizeable number of whom were Welsh. As a Regent of the State of New York, in 1793 Baron von Steuben laid the cornerstone of Hamilton-Oneida Academy, the educational institution that in 1812 would become Hamilton College. Financial setbacks forced him to leave his New York City residence and he spent his final years in the log cabin he built on his estate near Remsen. The Steuben Memorial State Historic Site, Starr Hill Road, Remsen, NY, boasts a replica of this log cabin as well as an impressive monument built in the early twentieth century to mark his grave.

On 3 August 1914 the Utica German-American Alliance dedicated the Parkway monument. Unforeseen events resulted in a case of exceptionally bad timing. In June of that year Serbian terrorists had assassinated Archduke Ferdinand, heir to the imperial throne of Austro-Hungary. Russia encouraged the Serbs and France saw an opportunity once again to seize Elßass and Lothringia from Germany. On 1 August Germany declared war on Russia and on 3 August—the very day of the Utica Steuben Monument’s dedication—Germany declared war on France, beginning hostilities that would for the first time bring Germany and the United States into conflict.

Proceeding east along the Parkway median towards Holland Avenue one arrives at the *VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL* (dedicated 14 September 1985, 13). Constructed of grey granite, the monument has a central stele with a relief of a soldier (slightly less than life size) flanked by two slabs. The slab to the right bears the inscription: THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED TO THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM FROM ONEIDA COUNTY BETWEEN 1959—1975. GONE AND NOT FORGOTTEN. On the left slab are inscribed the names of the fallen.

On the Parkway median to the east of Holland Avenue is a bronze bust of *GEORGE EARL DUNHAM* (dedicated 20 July 1931, 14), the work of the sculptor Filippo Scarlatta of Rome, Italy. The inscription on the granite base reads: ADVOCATE OF GOOD



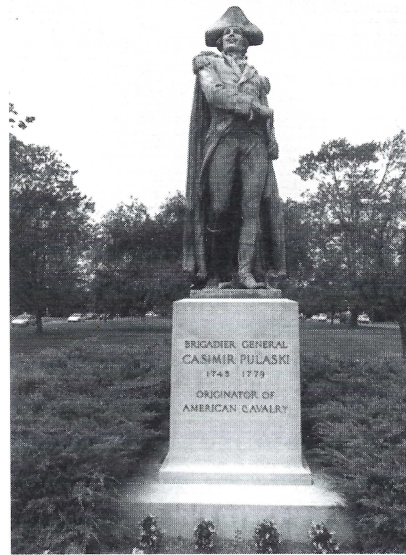
CAUSES. ERECTED BY HIS FELLOW CITIZENS AS A TRIBUTE TO HIS USEFUL LIFE IN UTICA.

Dunham (b. Clayville, NY, 1859; d. Utica, 1922), was the youngest member of his class when he was graduated in 1879 from Hamilton College, a brother of Psi Upsilon. The following year he was admitted to the Bar in Johnstown, NY, but practiced law for only one year. In 1891 he returned to Oneida County and began work with the Daily Press, only three months after its founding by a group of printers who had left the Utica Morning Herald. Four years later Dunham became Editor-in-Chief and President of the corporation that published the Daily Press.

Beginning in 1891 he was elected every four years a Trustee of Hamilton College, and after thirty years of service on the Board was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in 1921. He served on numerous boards, including the Board of Managers of the Utica State Hospital, where Dunham Hall was named after him. In the 1950s Hamilton College also named a residence hall after him. Of his many public services, the one of which he was most proud was his work in preparing immigrants for naturalization. At the time of his death he had just completed a book, *What Every Citizen Should Know*.

When the monument was dedicated in 1931, Wallace B. Johnson, Field Secretary of Hamilton College and a former reporter on the Daily Press unveiled the bust.

In the Parkway median on the west side of Oneida Street is the bronze statue of *BRIGADIER GENERAL COUNT CASIMIR PULASKI* (dedicated 12 October 1930, 15), the work of sculptor Joseph Pollia (b. Italy, 1893; d. NYC, 1954). As with General Steuben the eighteenth-century military uniform with its flowing cape gives the sculptor interesting formal opportunities. The striding pose and agitated drapery contribute to a more romantic image than that of the Steuben figure, though many might



prefer the broader masses of the Baron's statue to the somewhat fussy modeling in that of the Count.

Pulaski (b. Podolia, Poland, 1748; d. 1779, near Savannah) is a hero both in his native Poland and in the United States. He first gained military

glory in the unsuccessful rebellion against the Russian-dominated Polish king, Stanislaus II. Following Russian victories in Poland he fled to Prussia in 1772 and later to Paris where he met Benjamin Franklin, who gave him a letter of introduction to George Washington. Joining the American War of Independence in 1777 he served at Brandywine and Germantown. In 1778, rather than continue to serve under General Anthony Wayne, he resigned a cavalry command and formed the Pulaski legion. Pulaski was mortally wounded on 11 October 1779 while leading a cavalry charge in the attack on Savannah.

The inscription on the front of the granite base reads: ORIGINATOR OF AMERICAN CAVALRY; while on the rear are the words: ERECTED AND PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF UTICA BY THE POLISH AND AMERICAN RESIDENTS OF UTICA, NEW YORK MILLS, HERKIMER, MIDDLEVILLE AND VICINITY, OCTOBER 11, 1930.

The dedication was scheduled to coincide with the sesquicentennial of Pulaski's death, but was delayed a year. The early days of the Great Depression forced certain constraints upon the project. A scheme for a monumental equestrian statue proved too ambitious, and the figure actually cast was on a smaller scale than



originally intended. There was nothing small-scale about the dedication, however: the parade and unveiling ceremony was attended by over 10,000 people. The Reverend M. S. Dzialuk, who had begun the day with a solemn High Mass at Holy Trinity Church, presented the statue to the city. Miss Helen Megrel, dressed as Miss America, and Miss Helen Dziok, dressed as Miss Poland, pulled the strings which released the American flag and revealed the statue to a delighted throng.

Facing Pulaski on the east side of Oneida Street is the *SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR SOLDIERS AND SAILORS' MONUMENT* (16), also known as "The Hiker" or "The Doughboy". The Monument, dedicated on 5 July 1915, includes a bronze figure wearing a uniform of the

Spanish-American War standing on a 17-ton boulder.

The Sculptor was Allen George Newman (b. NYC, 1875; d. NYC, 1940). On the base are two bronze plaques. One bears the inscription:  
DEDICATED TO THE  
SOLDIERS AND  
SAILORS OF THE  
SPANISH AMERICAN  
WAR BY THE CITIZENS  
OF ONEIDA COUNTY,



JULY 5, 1915. The other reads: IN MEMORIAM, U. S. S. MAINE, DESTROYED IN HAVANA HARBOR, FEBRUARY 15, 1898, and in smaller print: THIS TABLET IS CAST FROM METAL RETRIEVED FROM THE U.S.S. MAINE. The "Hiker's" dedication coincided with the first observation of "Proctor Day", an event acknowledging the Proctor family's generosity, especially their role in the enlargement of Utica's park system of which the Parkway is an important component.

On the Parkway median between Oneida and Kemble Streets are two more war memorials. The first is the *MONUMENT TO PRISONERS OF WAR AND THOSE MISSING IN ACTION* (17). The bronze figure of a shackled prisoner on a granite base was dedicated in 1992. This disturbing image is made even more poignant by the inscriptions found on the front and back of the base: WE SPEAK FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T and DEDICATED TO ALL POW/MIA'S / ERECTED BY N. Y. S. POW/MIA ACTION GROUP 1992. At the four corners of the pedestal's rear face are the insignia of the four armed services.

A walkway leads from this monument to the new *WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL* (dedicated 2000, 18). Continuing east along the Parkway median we arrive at the intersection with Elm Street, where two monuments of totally disparate character face one another. To the west side of Elm is the *STATUE OF LIBERTY* (dedicated 15 October 1950, 19). The sheet copper figure is 8' tall and stands on a 7' pedestal, with a twelve-point star containing a flower bed at ground level. A bronze plaque on the front of the pedestal reads: WITH THE FAITH AND COURAGE OF / THEIR FOREFATHERS WHO MADE / POSSIBLE THE FREEDOM OF THESE / UNITED STATES / THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA / DEDICATE THIS COPY OF THE / STATUE OF LIBERTY AS A PLEDGE / OF EVERLASTING FIDELITY AND / LOYALTY / 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CRUSADE TO STRENGTHEN THE ARM OF LIBERTY / 1951. A second plaque below lists twelve citizens who presented the replica to the city, but gives the date SEPTEMBER 12, 1950 (one month before its official dedication)

On the east side of Elm Street is the *SWAN MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN* (1910, 20) which commemorates Robert Swan, a prominent Utica lawyer who died in 1906. His widow commissioned Frederick William MacMonnies (b. Brooklyn, NY, 1863; d. 1937) to design and execute the fountain with its bronze figurative elements and granite pedestal and basin. Unlike most of Utica's other

commemorative sculptures which feature large, soberly posed effigies, MacMonnies' Swan Memorial charms the



passerby with its variety of mythic creatures, including a cast-bronze figure of an infant Pan playing the panpipes, two mythic creatures—half goat, half sea-serpent—and four waterspouts in the form of dog and fish heads. The water flows into bronze sea-shells mounted on a granite shaft as well as into the large granite basin below. For almost a century this fountain has been a favourite of Uticans, many of whom fondly recall stopping at the fountain to have a cooling drink in warm weather and to let their dogs drink from one of the two dog fountains at the base. Ninety years of outdoor exposure as well as a recent ill-advised acid cleaning have left the monument in dire need of immediate conservation work.

MacMonnies studied with Augustus Saint-Gaudens and later with Alexandre Falguière at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, with further training in Munich. He ranks with the slightly older Daniel Chester French (1850-1931) and the Viennese-born Karl Bitter (1867-1915) as one of the leading American sculptors of his time. Like both of those prominent contemporaries, MacMonnies was responsible for some of the outstanding monumental sculpture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Utica is fortunate in having the earliest commissioned work of MacMonnies' master, Augustus Saint Gaudens: the 1874 marble figure of 'Silence' in the narthex of the Tompkins Memorial Chapel at the Masonic Home. Also to be seen here are two works of his contemporary, Karl Bitter: the 1895 high relief Caen-stone reredos in Richard Upjohn's Grace Church and the 1913 Louise Dellmayer Monument in Forest Hill Cemetery.

South of the Parkway, on the northern fringe of Roscoe Conkling Park, is the *THOMAS REDFIELD PROCTOR MONUMENT* (1921, 21). The sculptor of this monument is George Thomas Brewster, and the pose of the bronze figure of Proctor rivals in its assured dignity that of Brewster's Vice-President Sherman, done two years later. Inscribed on the pedestal are the words:



THIS MEMORIAL IS ERECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF UTICA TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY OF THOMAS REDFIELD PROCTOR WHO GAVE TO THE CITY HE LOVED ITS MAGNIFICENT SYSTEM OF PARKS.

Thomas Proctor (1844—1920) arrived in Utica in 1869 to become proprietor (and later owner) of Bagg's Hotel. He was also the president of the Second National Bank, a Trustee of the New York Roads Improvement Association, a Donator of the House of the Good Shepherd (an orphanage at Genesee and Burrstone Road), and President of the Oneida County Historical Society. The inscription on the pedestal calls attention to his extraordinary role in the development of Utica's park system. In 1899 he opened for public use 60 acres of the Bagg's Hotel Farm east of Culver Avenue. He quietly bought up land on the outskirts of the city and on 23 June 1907, after encouraging the Chamber of Commerce to engage the services of Frederick Law Olmstead, Jr., turned this newly acquired land over to

the city for use as parks. The 60 acre Bagg's Hotel Farm became T. R. Proctor Park, 385 acres south of the Parkway became Roscoe Conkling Park, and two plots of 17 acres each became Horatio Seymour Park (Sunset Avenue and Burrstone Road) and Addison Miller Park (York Street and Burrstone Road). The legal transfer of ownership continued until 1923 when Thomas Proctor's widow Maria deeded F. T. Proctor Park to the city.

The original location of the Thomas Proctor Monument was in Roscoe Conkling Park a few hundred yards to the east and higher up Steele Hill, where Proctor seemed to be surveying the extensive park system for which he was largely responsible. In 1997 the bronze statue was moved to its present location. Fragments of its granite base were reassembled, with poured concrete 'planters' replacing the original granite benches. Hence, the monument is no longer the object of quiet meditation, but rather something to be glimpsed from a passing automobile at forty miles an hour.



At the corner of the Parkway and Mohawk Street is the *CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS MONUMENT* (dedicated 25 April 1952, 22), the work of the sculptor Enrico Arrighini. Here again the present location is not the original one. Until 1966 Columbus stood on a traffic island at the intersection of Oriskany and John Streets. Identified on some older maps as Columbus Square, this had been the site of a weighing station and turning basin on

the Erie Canal. The development of the East-West Arterial forced the monument's removal and it was rededicated on Columbus Day (12 October) of 1966.

The bronze figure of the Genoese explorer (1451-1506) stands on a tall stone pedestal with a bas relief on its front depicting a sailing vessel with a figure at its bow and kneeling crew members. This is surely Columbus and the crew of the Santa María, and not the Mayflower as some local sources assert! On the front of the pedestal is the inscription: ERECTED BY THE CITIZENS OF UTICA UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE FEDERATION ITALIAN AMERICAN SOCIETIES OF UTICA, N.Y. APRIL 25, 1952. On the rear of the pedestal are the words: THE GREAT ITALIAN NAVIGATOR / CHALLENGED THE DOMINANT / OBSCURANTISM OF HIS TIME / CONQUERED THE UNKNOWN / GAVE HUMANITY A NEW WORLD / WAS REWARDED WITH CHAINS / AND HUMILIATION / DIED IN MISERY.

## UTICA COLLEGE CAMPUS



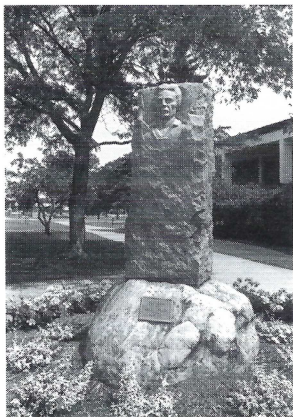
Another concentration of important outdoor sculpture can be found on the grounds of Utica College of Syracuse University. Entering the campus by the Burrstone Road entrance one discovers *PASSAGE* (1985, 23), a painted steel sculpture 12' X 3' X 20'. This work was produced by Mark Abilgaard (b. San Francisco, 1957) during a funded residency at Sculpture Space and given by the artist to Utica College. This abstract work is effectively sited amidst the trees near Hubbard Hall.

Abilgaard studied at San Francisco State University and at the University of Hawaii where he received an M.F.A. in 1983.

On the terrace between the Gannett Library and Di Perno Hall is *UNTITLED* (1983, 24), a highly polished stainless steel sculpture by Maria Andriopoulos Hall (b. Athens, Greece, c.1950). Hall received a B. A. from SUNY Albany in 1974 and an M. A. in 1979.



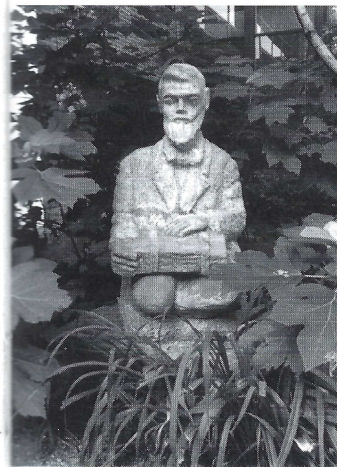
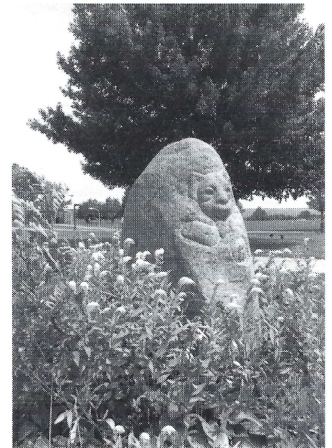
In front of Strebel Hall is *PIONEER* (1958, 25), the first of many sculptures on the Utica College campus by Henry Di Spirito (b. Castelforte, Italy, 1898; d. Utica, 1995). This bas-relief bust emerging from a pink granite block was commissioned from the sculptor by the class of 1957. Di Spirito had studied painting before immigrating in 1921 to the United States where he settled in Utica and worked as a stone mason. From 1941-1943 he studied sculpture with Richard Davis at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute School of Art. In 1963 Di Spirito became Artist-in-Residence at Utica College.



Although he worked in various materials, Di Spirito especially delighted in the challenge of working in very hard stone, such as granite, gneiss, and diorite, all of which are part of the geological history of Central New York. He was able to see within the shapes, colours and

textures of the stone latent images that he then drew forth. He had a special feeling for animal and insect life, and many of his creatures attain a totemic quality.

An example of one of his animal creatures emerging from a pink granite block is the *UNFINISHED TIGER* (1971, sometimes incorrectly labeled 'Lion', 26) in the quadrangle between the classroom buildings and Rocco di Perno Hall. In the Gannett Library Concourse Atrium are two animals carved from fieldstone: *SNAKE* and *ABSTRACT BIRD (MATERNAL)*, both of 1970 (27).



Two works in the courtyard of the Gordon Science Center are of cast stone (marble, silica, sand and cement). The seated figure of *ASA GRAY* (1978 (29)) is characteristic of his human figures, who in their quiet introspection always have either a stoic or a meditative quality. The *ABSTRACT MOSAIC* (1978, 29) combines cast stone with inlaid stone and tile. While

no specific flora or fauna is recognizable, the fluid forms have an organic quality that is more botanical than zoological. A number of other works by Di Spirito, including several maquettes, are part of the permanent collection of Utica College and can be seen in the Gannett Library or in the Addison Miller White Administration Building.

On the quadrangle between the classroom buildings and Rocco di Perno Hall is *MOTHER AND CHILD* (30), a bronze group on a stone base produced 1927-30 by sculptor William Zorach (b. Lithuania, 1887; d. NYC, 1966). Zorach immigrated with his family to the United States when he was four. After studying at the Cleveland School of Art and the



National Academy of Design in New York City, Zorach spent two years in France. After his return to the U.S. he turned from painting to sculpture, working mainly in stone and in wood. Although he had no formal training in the medium, the simplicity and solidity of his forms attained a monumentality that earned him a place among the foremost sculptors of his day. He taught at the Arts Students

League in New York. Zorach's *Mother and Child* was a gift to Utica College from the Art School of Syracuse University.

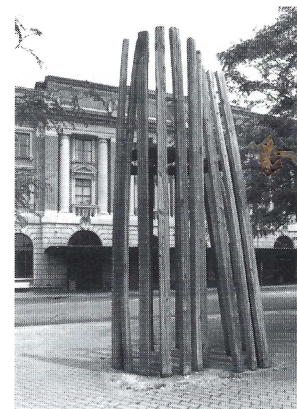
Although both Zorach and Di Spirito achieve a monumental simplicity of form, it is interesting to compare the softer modeling of Zorach with the glyptic forms of Di Spirito.

## OTHER LOCATIONS

On the opposite side of the city in a small triangular park at the intersection of Hilton Avenue and Arthur Street and just south of Proctor High School is another work of Henry Di Spirito known as *THE GRADUATE* (1975, 31). On each of two stacked boulders is a bronze plaque: the upper one has the relief heads of a male and a female student in academic cap; the other bears an inscription reading, IN MEMORY OF ALL THOSE WHO HAVE WALKED THE HALLS OF PROCTOR HIGH SCHOOL TO DATE.

Across Main Street from Union Station is *BAGG'S PIECE* (1981, 32), the work of Oneida County sculptor John von

Bergen (b. Stockholm, Sweden, 1939). This abstract sculpture of structural steel and pressure-treated yellow pine pays homage to one of Utica's earliest citizens, Moses Bagg (1750-1811).



Bagg arrived in the village of Utica in 1794, purchased four acres of land and opened a blacksmith shop on a site about one hundred yards to the west of this sculpture. The next year he built a two-story tavern at the corner of John and Main Streets that he operated until his death in 1811. In 1812 his son, Moses Bagg, Jr., replaced the old wooden structure with a brick building which became the nucleus of Bagg's Hotel which until 1932 dominated Bagg's Square.

John von Bergen is a 1963 graduate of Hamilton College where he studied with James Penney. Subsequently, he studied at the University of Minnesota, at the Arts Student's League and received an M. F. A. from Pratt Institute in 1967. He taught for many years at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute School of Art and has been a visiting professor of art at both Hamilton College and Colgate University. His work can be found in the permanent collection of all three institutions and in many other public and private collections. Much his sculpture is in cast metal, and he maintains a foundry near Paris Hill. The Co-Founder of Sculpture Space, he remains a member of its Board of Directors.

Utica has numerous historical markers. Although most have minimal sculptural interest, a few are worth including here for their exceptional historical and human significance. The site of Bagg's Hotel is marked by a little park commissioned by Maria Proctor as a memorial to her late husband, Thomas R. Proctor, who from 1869-

1898 had been the proprietor of Bagg's Hotel. Local lore has it that the stone pavilion was intended to house the records of the historic hostelry, but by the time it was completed the documents had vanished. Two stone stele with bronze plaques from 1910 and 1912 inaccurately identify the little park as the site of Fort Schuyler, built in the 1750s to guard a ford of the Mohawk River during the French and Indian War. A third bronze plaque, dated 1912 (33), on the wall of the pavilion correctly states that the fort was located 1500 feet to the west (at 401 Main Street, the present site of Charles Millar & Sons). It was to the abandoned Fort Schuyler that the mortally wounded General Herkimer was brought after the Battle of Oriskany on 6 August 1777.

At the northeast corner of Broad and Second Streets is a *MONUMENT COMMEMORATING THE FIRST ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS IN UTICA*. (dedicated 1932, 34). This consists of a small boulder with a bronze plaque and is so low to the ground that it is easily overlooked by motorists on busy Broad Street. The inscription reads: ON THIS SITE THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS WAS FIRST OFFERED IN UTICA IN 1813 BY THE REVEREND PAUL McQUADE, A MISSIONARY FROM ALBANY. ERECTED BY SANTA FE CARAVAN, NO. 40 / ORDER OF ALHAMBRA / UTICA, N. Y. 1932.

The mass referred to was celebrated in the Broad Street house of John Devereux, who, with his brother Nicholas Devereux, was the founder of the Savings Bank of Utica. At that time Utica was part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. The first Catholic church in Utica was built in 1821 at the intersection of John and Bleeker Streets (across the street from the present Historic St. John's Church, begun in 1869 and the fourth church at this location.)

On a small, triangular piece of land just north of Steuben Park is Police and Fireman's Park with the *POLICE AND FIREMAN'S MEMORIAL* (dedicated 6 October 1971, 35). This is a granite stele 7' tall with the

words DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO SERVE inscribed on the front beneath badges of the Police and Fire Departments. On the rear of the stele we read: WE LOVED THEM IN LIFE / LET US NOT / FORGET THEM IN DEATH. This simple but eloquent monument was the gift of Lansing Street resident, Mrs. Mary Servello Hendricks, who—as a nurse—also served the community.



Utica's parks once contained several notable fountains. The cast-iron fountain in Steuben Park with its raised basin supported by four swans is an attractive fragment (36) of the fountain erected in Steuben Park in 1875 during the term of Mayor Charles W. Hutchinson. That 18' high fountain, purchased from J. L. Mott of New York City, included four 'enraged swans,' four bathing boys, two Pans, and was surmounted by a female figure inspired by the Hebe of the Neo-classical sculptor Antonio Canova. By 1907 "the leaning lady of Steuben Park" had fallen into disrepair. J. L. Mott replaced it with a figure of a boy who once held high an electric globe to illumine the park at night but who has long since vanished. The surviving fragment was restored after an out-of-control motorist crashed into it in the 1980s. Also in 1875, a fountain with a 50' diameter basin was placed in Chancellor Park, but the spectacular zinc and bronze group of Neptune in a shell chariot drawn by two dolphins was removed in the 1950s, an early victim of the 'anything new is better than everything old' mentality.

One bit of monumental sculpture which happily survives in Utica's park system is *THE EAGLE* (1929, 37) located at the overlook in Roscoe Conkling Park. Perched on a granite pedestal the bronze eagle is 7' high with a wingspread of 6'. The sculptor was Charles Keck (b. NYC, 1875; d. NYC, 1951) who collaborated in the design of the monument with the New York City architectural firm of F. B. & A. Ware. A student of Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Keck also studied at the

National Academy of Design and the Arts Students League, and was a fellow of the American Academy in Rome.

The Eagle is the second of the two monuments in Roscoe Conkling Park commemorating Thomas R. Proctor, who died on 4 July 1920; but while the monument to Proctor further down the hill was the result of public subscription, this one was a private donation. A bronze plaque on the east side of the pedestal reads:



THE MONUMENT IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY AND HONOUR OF THOMAS REDFIELD PROCTOR BY HIS WIFE. HE WAS AN INCORRUPTIBLE CITIZEN AND A PURE PATRIOT. IF ASKED WHAT HE WISHED IN REWARD FOR ANY GOOD PUBLIC DEED, HE ANSWERED, "I WANT NOTHING."

The words below this explain the imagery of the memorial:

AN AMERICAN EAGLE IN A CAGE WAS ONCE GIVEN TO HIM. HE BOUGHT IT AND LIBERATED IT ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY. IT PAUSED A MOMENT AND THEN TOOK ITS FLIGHT. HE, ALSO, WAS GIVEN HIS LIBERTY ON THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY 1920 AND WENT THE WAY THE BIRD DID, SEEKING HIS NATIVE ELEMENT AND THE TRUE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY.

A bronze plaque on the west face of the shaft contains a Biblical text:

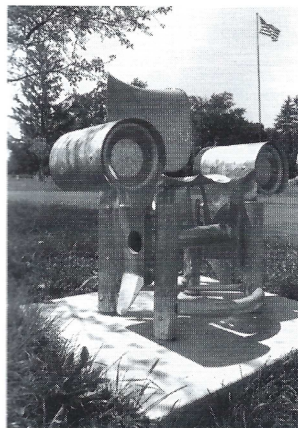
AND SOME MAY BE WHICH HAVE NO MEMORIAL; WHO ARE BECOME AS THOUGH THEY HAD NEVER BEEN BORN AND THEIR CHILDREN AFTER THEM—AND THEIR BODIES ARE BURIED IN PEACE; BUT THEIR NAME LIVETH FOREVERMORE. ECCLESIASTICUS CHAP. 44 VER. 14—19



Another bronze Eagle honouring Frederick T. Proctor once stood in F. T. Proctor Park, but was removed in the 1950s and its present whereabouts are unknown.

The nearby boulder identifying this area as Roscoe Conkling Park was unveiled by Conkling's granddaughter on 3 July 1909.

Several yards to the east of the Overlook Eagle, and sited on the edge of the plateau is the *ENDOWED CHAIR* (1999, 38), a galvanized steel chair facing the valley. This was made at Sculpture Space by Jonathan Kirk (b. Cornwall, UK, 1955), a remarkable sculptor who has for many years been a resident of Utica where he serves as studio manager at Sculpture Space. This work was produced in connection with the 1999 'CHAIRity' auction, an annual fundraising event for which artists are invited to contribute inventive chairs or other intriguing items of furnishing. The title of this work derives from the Endowed Chair program, an outgrowth of the CHAIRity auction, which pairs an artist with a business; the artist receives money for materials and the



sponsor receives a custom-made piece. In this case the sponsor was O. W. Hubbell and Sons Galvanizing who donated the work to the City of Utica. Impressive though it be, Kirk's chair would be even more effective if it were moved to the adjacent parking circle, where the view would be equally panoramic but the human scale of the chair would not

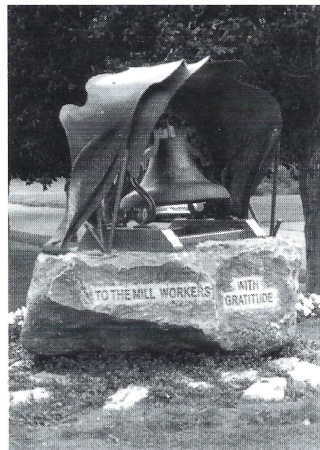
be overwhelmed by the giant Eagle and cyclopean boulder.

On the Court Street side of City Hall is *CYCLE* (1967, 39), the work of sculptor James McDermid (b. Chicago, 1930). This abstract sculpture, of cement impregnated with polymer, rests on a granite base. It was presented to the city by the Junior League. McDermid studied at Syracuse University and at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan. He lives and maintains a sculpture studio in Rome, NY, and is a member of the Faculty of the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute School of Art. Although he is greatly admired for his work in carved wood—perhaps the most difficult of all sculptural media—he often chooses other materials for his work out of doors.

One of James McDermid's most recent public works is the *HISTORICAL BELL MONUMENT* (40, dedicated 8 July 2000). This impressive work of iron, sheet copper and stone can be seen in Pulaski Park in New York Mills, at the corner of Main and Walcott Streets.

McDermid and the Very Reverend Walter Madej (b. Izbiska, Poland, 1943), the Priest of Sacred Heart of Jesus-Holy Cross Polish National Catholic Church and an accomplished sculptor, have collaborated to produce an impressive monument to the mill

workers of the area. The cast-iron bell, like the limestone blocks that define the precinct around it, came from the 1825 Middle Mill (Number 2 Mill). For more than a century it rang to summon employees to work, to signal the beginning and end of the lunch period, and to mark the end of the work day. It rang



curfew for children at 9 p.m., lights out for the mill workers at 10, and sounded the alarm in case of fire. After the Middle Mill ceased operation in 1951 and the bell was given to the New York Mills parish of the Polish National Catholic church, it took on a sacred roll, ringing the Angelus at noon and 6 p.m. and tolling for the funerals of parishioners (its ultimate roll as a marker of time). When an electronic carillon was installed in 1993, the bell seemed to lose its essential roll in village life. Now, thanks to Fr. Madej, the bell is a highly visible reminder of the community's past and a celebration of its faith in the future. The bell is mounted on a large vessel-like rock (suggesting the ships that brought the immigrant workers here?). Carved on the sides of the rock are the words:

TO THE MILL WORKERS / WITH GRATITUDE / THEY  
ANSWERED THIS BELL / THEIR LABOR MADE OUR  
FUTURE RICH / WHEN IT STRIKES OUR SPIRIT  
LISTENS.

The shapes of the sheet-copper awning suggest angelic wings, recalling the Angelus Domini prayer and seeking divine protection for the bell and all who have heard it.

At the very eastern edge of Utica is the MASONIC HOME. The grounds include three impressive outdoor

sculptures. On the entrance front of the Tompkins Memorial Chapel is a bronze relief bust (1910) of the jurist and statesman *DANIEL D. TOMPKINS* (41).



Working in collaboration with the architect H. P. Knowles was the Scots-American sculptor John



Massey Rhind (b. Edinburgh, 1860; d. London, 1936).

The inscription below the relief gives the salient details of Tompkins life:

BORN IN SCARSDALE / WESTCHESTER CO. 1774. 1795  
GRADUATED / FROM COLUMBIA COLLEGE. 1797  
ADMITTED / TO THE BAR. GRAND / SECRETARY  
OF THE / GRAND LODGE 1801 / ELECTED TO  
CONGRESS 1804. ELECTED / A JUSTICE OF THE  
SUPREME COURT 1804 / 1807 ELECTED / GOVERNOR  
OF THE / STATE OF NEW YORK / (SERVED TEN YEARS)  
/ 1816 ELECTED VICE- / PRESIDENT OF THE /  
UNITED STATES / SERVED TWO TERMS / 1820  
ELECTED GRAND/MASTER OF MASONS / IN THE  
STATE OF N. Y. / (SERVED TWO TERMS)

A third-generation sculptor, J. M. Rhind studied in Edinburgh with his father, John Rhind. He later studied with Jules Dalou in Paris before immigrating to the United States in 1889. At the time of the Tompkins memorial Rhind was one of the most successful and prolific sculptors in America, famous for both public monuments and architectural sculpture. His portrait bust of Andrew Carnegie can be seen in many libraries. Rhind was firmly grounded in the Beaux-Arts tradition, and—although he lived until 1936—remained unaffected by the ‘modern movement.’ As a result, he has been unjustly neglected since his death.

Not out of doors, but of exceptional importance, is the life-size marble figure of *SILENCE* (1874) in the narthex of the Tompkins Chapel, an early work by Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848—1907). Born in Dublin, the son of an Irish mother and a French father, Saint-Gaudens came to the United States as an infant. After three years in Paris followed by three in Rome, Saint-Gaudens returned to the United States in 1878 and was soon recognized as one of the most important figures in American art.

To the south of the Soldiers and Sailors’ Memorial Hospital and near the Bleecker Street entrance to the grounds is a large fountain (1922, 42) with a monumental group of allegorical figures atop a granite base. The imagery—best understood by Masons— includes a standing female in Egyptoidal dress flanked by two male nudes, one sitting and the other standing. From crustaceans placed at the bottom of the bronze group water spouts into the large granite basin at ground level. The inscription on the granite plinth reads: THE TENTH DISTRICT MASTER AND PAST MASTERS ASSOCIATION.

In front of the Soldiers and Sailors’ Memorial Hospital is the *WORLD WAR I MEMORIAL* (1931, 43). The most memorable of all the war memorials in Utica, this impressive work

includes a bronze statue on a high pedestal with bronze elements on each of its four faces. It is the work of sculptor David Cunningham Lithgow (b. Glasgow, Scotland, 1868; d. Albany, NY). Lithgow emigrated to NYC in 1888, then moved to Albany, where he was still living in 1935. He worked not only as a sculptor but also as a painter of landscapes and portraits.



The figure in the Utica monument, who wears a World War I uniform, is identified on the bronze plaque on the rear of the pedestal as Lieutenant Orville Parker Johnson, 103 Machine Gun Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Division, who was killed in action at Torcy, France, 18 July 1918. Lieutenant Johnson was the son of M. W. Charles H. Johnson, Grand Master of the Masons.

In addition to the plaque identifying the figure, there are plaques on each of the other three sides, with bas-relief groups of soldiers above inscriptions. The text on the front (from the Gospel of St John) reads:

GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT HE GIVE UP HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS. On the north side one reads: AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING WE WILL REMEMBER THEM. Most poignant of all are the words on the south side: THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD. AGE DOES NOT WEARY THEM NOR THE YEARS CONDEMN.

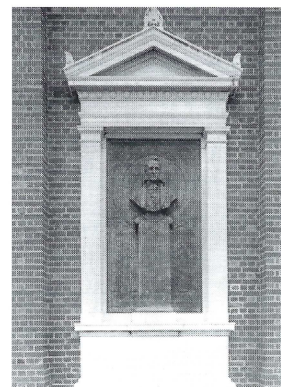
Few could fail to respond to these moving words. Yet, if Lieutenant Johnson and all those who have met an untimely death in the service of their country will remain forever young in the memory of their loved ones (and in the higher realm to which their souls have risen), these all too solid monuments exist in the material world. However ageless their message, these unique and irreplaceable works are subject to the ravages of time and require the attention of qualified conservators to ensure that they will endure to inform, delight, and inspire future generations. Let us hope that all those responsible for the care of the sculpture included in this booklet will act prudently and wisely.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## Landmarks Society of Greater Utica

The Landmarks Society of Greater Utica was chartered by the State of New York on 25 October 1974 as a nonprofit, educational corporation organized to preserve historic buildings and districts in the Utica area for the education and enjoyment of the public. In its efforts to promote a knowledge and appreciation of the essential role of building conservation in Utica's economic and social



future, Landmarks sponsors public lectures and workshops, walking tours, and visits to architecturally significant sites both locally and throughout New York State. It offers advice and / or small grants to individuals and groups engaged in conserving and rehabilitating historic buildings. Members receive a quarterly newsletter and have access to a small library on building conservation and historic preservation.